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ABSTRACT

The Career Employee Association at Daytona Beach Community College provides a valuable linkage between career employees and the college's administration. This linkage fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect that makes the employment situation more pleasant and thus improves employee performance. While not a union, the Association has been able to reach informal agreements with the administration on salary and benefit proposals that are presented before the legislature. Other examples of Association/administration interaction include the president's participation in career employee forums, the participation of career employees in the college's Staff and Program Development Committee, and the provision of career employee inservice workshops which, by mutual consent, are held before or after business hours. These efforts, in addition to increasing productivity, have facilitated prompt solutions to potential problems and have played a pivotal role in promoting the intra-campus communications necessary to the college's growth. (JP)

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GETTING ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR NON-ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FOR CAREER EMPLOYEES

Charles H. Polk

Speech presented at the Convention of the Florida Association of Community Colleges (Orlando, November 12-15, 1980).

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GOOD MORNING...

I APPRECIATE BEING ABLE TO SPEAK TO YOU THIS MORNING AND TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME OF MY VIEWS ON CAREER EMPLOYEES...THEIR CARE AND FEEDING...I'VE BEEN ASKED TO DISCUSS CAREER EMPLOYEES FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE VIEWPOINT...AND...I COULD STAND HERE AND TELL YOU THAT ALL ADMINISTRATORS FEEL AS I DO, THAT CAREER EMPLOYEES ARE THE BACKBONE OF AN INSTITUTION...THAT WITHOUT CAREER EMPLOYEES WHO ARE SATISFIED AND COMFORTABLE IN THEIR ROLES ANY INSTITUTION COULD NOT RUN SMOOTHLY...AND THAT A GOOD PART OF AN ADMINISTRATORS RESPONSIBILITY IS TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR CAREER EMPLOYEES TO FULFILL THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES...

BUT...YOU EACH KNOW WHAT THE FACTS ARE AT YOUR INDIVIDUAL COLLEGE...AND ALL I CAN DO IS LET YOU IN ON MY MOTIVES AND MY BELIEFS AND FEELINGS...FIRST...LET ME TELL YOU A TALE... A FABLE, IF YOU WILL...

DURING A HIKE IN THE WOODS, A GROUP OF CAMPERS WANDERED UPON AN ABANDONED SECTION OF RAILROAD TRACK. EACH CAMPER TRIED TO WALK THE RAILS, BUT THEY EVENTUALLY LOST THEIR BALANCE AND TUMBLED OFF INTO THE GRASS. AFTER A WHILE TWO OF THE CAMPERS MADE A BET THAT THEY COULD WALK THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE TRACK. SEVERAL OF THE OTHERS OVERHEARD THE BET AND PRODDED THE TWO TO HONOR IT. QUICKLY, THE TWO CAMPERS JUMPED UP ON OPPOSITE RAILS...EXTENDED A HAND TO BALANCE EACH OTHER AND THEN THEY SUCCESSFULLY WALKED THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF TRACK...THE MORAL IS THAT WORKING AS A TEAM YOU CAN COMPLETE ANY MISSION AND OVERCOME MOST OBSTACLES...

THIS INCIDENT IS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION AT DAYTONA BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE...

THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION PROVIDES WHAT HAS PROVEN TO BE A VALUABLE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE CAREER EMPLOYEES AND ME...

YOU, THE CAREER EMPLOYEES, NORMALLY COMPRISE THE LARGEST NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AT THE COLLEGE. YOU ARE THE FIRST TEAM. EACH ONE OF YOU, SERVES IN SOME CAPACITY AS A PROFESSIONAL, PARA-PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICIAN OR SPECIALIST. YOU ARE THE ONES THAT GREET THE PUBLIC AND SEND THEM BACK INTO THE COMMUNITY WITH A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE IMPRESSION...

IT IS NECESSARY, I FEEL, THAT YOU BE REWARDED WITH SOMETHING OTHER THAN JUST A PAY CHECK...AN OCCASIONAL PAT ON THE BACK (UNLESS IT IS WITH A SLEDGE HAMMER) NEVER HURT ANYONE...

BEING ABLE TO DISCUSS YOUR IDEAS OR PROBLEMS OPENLY WITH SOMEONE DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH SETTING POLICY AND IS INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINION ONLY SERVES TO MAKE YOUR EMPLOYMENT SITUATION MORE PLEASANT...

A CAREER EMPLOYEES GROUP, SIMILAR TO THOSE YOU WILL SHORTLY HEAR ABOUT CAN AND DOES PROVIDE A VEHICLE FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN CAREER EMPLOYEES AND ADMINISTRATORS...I HAVE FOUND THIS TO BE TRUE WHICH IS WHY I SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION, IT IS MY WAY OF SAYING THANK YOU...

MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN TO ALL STAFF MEMBERS. GRANTED I MAY NOT ALWAYS AGREE, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT I DON'T LISTEN...

AND BEING REALISTIC YOU WILL EACH ADMIT THAT NO ONE ALWAYS AGREES WITH YOU...

WITHOUT THE OPEN COMMUNICATION AFFORDED BY THIS INTERACTION, I PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE ADDRESSING THIS ASSEMBLY TODAY. AFTER ALL,

IF I OVERLOOKED THE CAREER EMPLOYEES THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO REASON FOR ME TO BE HERE...

THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION IS NOT A UNION AND SHOULD NOT BE THOUGHT OF AS ONE. AT DBCC WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH, THROUGH COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION, MANY THINGS THAT BENEFIT BOTH THE CAREER EMPLOYEES AND THE COLLEGE...EACH YEAR, FOR EXAMPLE, I SIT DOWN WITH THE CAREER EMPLOYEES SALARY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW AND DISCUSS A BENEFITS PACKAGE...USUALLY THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS REACHING A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY DECISION...QUITE NATURALLY THE ITEMS REQUESTED ARE CONTINGENT UPON THE BUDGET APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATURE...I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT TO THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY HAVE SOME DOUBT...CAREER EMPLOYEES ARE A VERY ARTICULATE, SERIOUS MINDED, AND HAVE A GREAT MANY PRACTICAL IDEAS FROM WHICH WE CAN ALL BENEFIT...

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE INTERACTION AT DBCC IS THAT WHEN I AM INVITED TO ATTEND THE TWO CAREER EMPLOYEE FORUMS EACH YEAR, IT GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER...IF I DID NOT FEEL THAT THESE TWO KEY MEETINGS WERE OF SOME VALUE TO THE COLLEGE AND THE CAREER EMPLOYEES, I WOULD NOT ATTEND...THE OPEN SESSIONS HELP DISPEL SOME OF THE RUMORS THAT ARE USUALLY DAMAGING TO MORALE AND DECREASE PRODUCTIVITY.

ONE AREA THAT CONCERNS MOST OF YOU IS STAFF AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT...LET ME SAY THIS, FIRST, OUR SPD COMMITTEE HAS TWO CAREER EMPLOYEES AS VOTING MEMBERS. SECOND, THE CAREER EMPLOYEES AT DBCC RECEIVE THE SECOND HIGHEST AMOUNT FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT. THEY ARE SECOND ONLY BECAUSE SO MANY OF THEM ARE TAKING CLASSES ON CAMPUS.

THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO ME.

I URGE MY ADMINISTRATORS, DIRECTORS, AND CHAIRMEN TO ENCOURAGE THEIR STAFF TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS. THE CAREER EMPLOYEES, HOWEVER, ARE THE ONES THAT SET UP THE WORKSHOPS ALL OF WHICH PROVIDE IN-SERVICE TRAINING. BY WAY OF COOPERATION, SINCE I DO NOT FEEL THAT COLLEGE EMPLOYEES WERE HIRED TO ATTEND MEETINGS ALL DAY...THE WORKSHOPS PRESENTED IN THE MORNING ARE REPEATED IN THE AFTERNOON. IN THIS WAY ANYONE INTERESTED CAN ATTEND THE SESSIONS AND THE OFFICES NEED NOT OPERATE IN A LESS EFFICIENT MANNER.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IF THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ARE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND FOR THE MOST PART ARE CONTENT ON THE JOB, THEY DO PERFORM BETTER BECAUSE THEY HAVE A SENSE OF PRIDE. AT DBCC WE HAVE A TWO-WAY STREET OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND IT MAKES A VAST DIFFERENCE WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING THE JOB DONE...

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WHEN I BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE DAYTONA BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE IT WAS A SMALL SLEEPY, INSTITUTION...WHILE THERE WAS AN AIR OF CONTENTMENT ABOUT THE CAMPUS...BENEATH THAT PLACIDITY...THERE WAS A LACK OF PURPOSEFULNESS...THERE WAS NO ENTHUSIASM...THERE WAS NONE OF THE EXCITEMENT OF A GROWING...SPREADING...MATURING INSTITUTION...WHILE THE POTENTIAL FOR GREATNESS WAS THERE...NO ONE GROUP ON CAMPUS WAS EXTENDING THEIR HANDS ACROSS THAT RAILROAD TRACK TO HELP SUPPORT ANY OTHER GROUP...WHILE STRONG AND CLOSE FRIENDSHIPS HAD BEEN FORMED BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS OF EVERY SEGMENT OF THE STAFF...THERE WAS A LACK OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THOSE GROUPS...THERE WAS NO URGE TO LEARN EACH OTHERS CONCERNS AND CONSEQUENTLY NO URGE TO HELP RESOLVE ANY OF THEM...

I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU...FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS THAT THINGS HAVE

INDEED CHANGED AT DAYTONA BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE...THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF A STRONG, WELL ESTABLISHED AND ARTICULATE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION...THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF INTERACTION AMONG FACULTY...ADMINISTRATORS AND THOSE SAME CAREER EMPLOYEES... MANY TIMES A POTENTIAL PROBLEM IS SOLVED AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE LEVEL...BEFORE ANY OTHER THAN THE CONCERNED INDIVIDUALS NEED TO GET INVOLVED OR TAKE FORMAL ACTION...THESE INFORMAL SOLUTIONS HAVE BUILT A BASE OF MUTUAL RESPECT ON OUR CAMPUS AND HAS LED TO SUCH HERETOFORE UNHEARD OF FUNCTIONS AS THE UPCOMING CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON ON OUR CAMPUS...WHICH THE CAREER EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION IS SPONSORING AND ARRANGING, BUT WHICH WE EXPECT, FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, TO BE WELL ATTENDED BY FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF...AND THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER SUCH OCCASIONS DURING THE PAST YEARS WHICH HAVE LED TO COMFORTABLE RELATIONS AMONG ALL SEGMENTS OF OUR STAFF.

EVEN BEFORE I BECAME PRESIDENT OF DAYTONA BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, I BELIEVED IN THE CAREER EMPLOYEES, THEIR NECESSITY AND THEIR WORTH...I WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THEM, BECAUSE WITHOUT THEM THERE WOULD BE A PROFESSIONAL VOID AT EACH COLLEGE...BESIDES, WHO WOULD MAKE THE COFFEE AND KEEP THE BUILDINGS CLEAN?... SERIOUSLY THOUGH, I WANT TO CONGRATULATE YOU, THE CAREER EMPLOYEES--OUR FIRST TEAM, ON THE FINE JOB YOU HAVE DONE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO IN THE FUTURE.

THANK YOU!!!

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